TRANSCRIPT PREPARED BY THE CLERK OF THE LEGISLATURE Transcriber's Office

March 8, 2000 LB 171

members who are concerned about the fiscal note, the fiscal note That's the yearly cost that the Fiscal partials out that. Office has projected that this will cost us. It's not ongoing. It's not going to be four hundred, five hundred thousand dollars every year for the next ten years. It's going to be until those...for that three-year...that three-and-a-half-year period of time that it cost us. So that's the reason. I think it's misleading to say that the fiscal note isn't accurate. fiscal note is accurate. What they've done is taken the total cost, they've "partialed" it out over that period of time and that's how we do most every other bill around here. The problem is that these people have got to come in, make substantial investments. Believe me, the local TV station didn't get together with ABC and said, hey, here's a way for us all to make let's switch to digital. The local...the locals are a lot like any other business. They're the tail that's being wagged by the FCC who thinks it's neat, this is what people want, we want to be responsive, we want to be into the digital You have politicians who run all over the country who say, great, we want to...we want to create this new digital world that will make everybody's lives better. The problem is the local companies, in this case the local broadcasters, have to pay the price to do that. Now what they're figuring is that over a period of the next four years, for most of us, TV sets turn over. Now, I know Senator Vrtiska probably has the same TV set he had in 1960, but he's the exception and not the rule. You do have that same TV set, don't you, Senator Vrtiska? I thought you did. And some day you'll see color too. But what happens here is that people need to understand the broadcasters have put themselves into a position where they have no room to go. My guess is this switch to digital may well be the end of two or three stations in this state financially. They may have a very tough time making even the initial investment. Does this bill guarantee that they're going to be saved? No, not at all. Does this give them some assistance to do that? Yes, it does. And you do have 13 other states have done it. You've got it pending in 15 other states. It's a common problem in a number of states. The trouble is, in some of the higher population markets, these things have already come into play, they're already required, and over a period of time they're going to be broadcasting...